TAWHEED

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Ash-Shirk (Polytheism)

Definition: Polytheism is to belief in a partner for Allâh in His Rububiah (Lordship) and Uluhiah (Worship). And the most commonly occurring is the polytheism in His *Uluhiyyah* (Worship) in a sort that they invoke someone else with Allâh or perform some kind of worship to this partner, such as, slaughtering, vow, fear, hope, love. As a matter of fact, *Shirk* (Polytheism) is the greatest sin, and this is because:

1- It is a likening of the Creator to His creature in Divine characteristics, because whoever joins others in worship with Allâh has, in fact, assimilated Him to this claimed partner. And this is the greatest Zulm (wrong deed), Allâh said, (لقمان 13) "إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ" - meaning – "Verily, *ash-Shirk* (Polytheism) is indeed the highest wrongdoing." And *Zulm* (wrong) is to put something in another place than its right place. So if someone joins a partner in worship with Allâh, then he has put his worship in a wrong place and has performed his duty to this who does not deserve it, and this is more sinful.

2- Allâh informed that He would not forgive this great sin for this who does not repent from it. Allâh said, "إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ" (النساء 48)- meaning – "Allâh forgives not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgives anything else."

3- Allâh informed that Paradise is forbidden for this who joins a partner with Allâh in worship and Hellfire will be his adobe eternally settling in there. Allâh said, "إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ" (المائدة 72) - meaning – "Whoever joins other gods with Allâh, Allâh will forbid him the Paradise, and the Fire will be his abode. There will for the wrongdoers be no one to help."

4- It (*Shirk*) causes all pious deeds to be in vain, Allâh said, "ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ" (الأنعام 88) -meaning – "This is the Guidance of Allâh: He gives that guidance to whom He pleases of His worshippers. If they were to join other gods with Him, all that they did would be vain for them." And said, "وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنْ الْخَاسِرِينَ" (الزمر70) - meaning – "But it has already been revealed to you, - as it was to those before you - If you were to join (gods with Allâh), truly fruitless will be your work (in life), and you will surely be in the ranks of those who lose (all spiritual good)."

5- The blood (life) and the property of the one who joins others with Allâh in worship is unproscribed, Allâh said, "فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ وَاحْصُرُوهُمْ وَاقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصَدٍ" (التوبة 5)- meaning – "Then fight and slay the Pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war)." And the Prophet said, "أمرت أن أقاتل الناس حتى يقولوا لا إله إلا الله و يُقيموا الصلاة و يُؤتوا الزكاة" - meaning - "I have been commanded (by Allâh) to fight against people till they testify that, *'Lâ ilâha illallâh'*, i.e. 'there is no truly worshipped god but Allâh, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh', perform Prayer, and pay *Zakat*. So if they do that, their blood and property are guaranteed protection on my behalf except when justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allâh."

6- *Shirk* is the greatest among kabaa'ir (Great Sins), the Prophet said, "ألا أنبئكم بأكبر الكبائر" - meaning - "Should I not inform you about the most grievous of the grave sins?" We (his companions) said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allâh," he said, "الإشراك بالله وعقوق الوالدين" - meaning - "Associating anyone with Allâh, disobedience to parents…"

Therefore, *Shirk* (Polytheism) is the greatest *Zulm* (Wrong deed), and the *Tawhîd* (Monotheism) is the fairest just. And whatever contradicts with this aimed fact most, then it is the greatest *Zulm* (wrong) and Allâh has forbidden Paradise for those who join with Him others in worship and He unproscribed their lives, properties, and wives for those who worship Him alone. And then allowed for the latter to keep the former as slaves because of their polytheism. Moreover, Allâh refused to approve any single deed for the polytheist, or to accept any intercession from anyone. Or even accept a call from him on the Day of Resurrection. This is because the polytheist is the most ignorant man for he adopted with Allâh a partner, and this is in fact a mere ignorance, but the *Zulm* (unjust) committed is not against Allâh, it is against himself.

7- *Shirk* is defect and a fault, which Allâh deemed himself far above. Therefore, whoever joined with Allâh others in worship has approved to Allâh features that Allâh deemed Himself far above, and this is an extreme contradiction and opposition to Allâh.

Types of *Shirk*:

Shirk is divided into two types

First type: *Ash-Shirk al-Akbar* (Major Polytheism), causes his people not to be Muslims anymore and to settle eternally in the HellFire if he died without repenting. It is to perform any of the known worship to another one than Allâh, such as to invoke and approach to this claimed partner with slaughtering and vows approached to graves, jinn, and devils. And such as the fear from the dead or jinn or devils not to harm or cause sickness, or to hope from them what could not be got except from Allâh. Unfortunately, this is nowadays seen at dolmens built over graves of pious and good men, Allâh said, "وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَؤُلاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا عِنْدَ اللَّـــهِ" - meaning – "They worship, besides Allâh, things that hurt them not nor profit them, and they say: 'These are our intercessors with Allâh'".

Second type: *Ash-Shirk al-Asghar* (Minor Polytheism), does not extrude out of Islâm, but surely diminishes some of the Monotheism and it is certainly a way to reach the major one. And it is two classes:

First class: apparent *shirk*, and it is by word and deed. By word such as swear by someone other than Allâh, the Prophet said, "من حلف بغـــير الله"- meaning – "He who swears by anything beside Allâh is guilty of an act of disbelief (or of associating something with Allâh)." And saying ([let it be] whatever Allâh and you want), for when someone said to Allâh's Messenger, '[let it be] whatever Allâh and you want', he replied by saying, "أجعلتني لله نداّ" - meaning - "Have you considered me a peer for Allâh? But you should rather say, '[let it be] what Allâh alone wants.'" And similarly saying 'had it not been for Allâh and so and so', but rather one should say, ''[let it be] whatever Allâh wants then so and so wants'. It is so 'had it not been for Allâh then so and so' because 'then' indicates succession with lessening, so it makes the will of the slave be led after the Will of Allâh, as He said, "وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ" (التكوير 29) - meaning – "But you shall not will except as Allâh wills; the Cherisher of the Worlds." As for 'and', it indicates uniting and sharing in the mentioned features. Such as when someone says, "I only have (as a supporter) Allâh and you," or says, "This is from Allâh's and your Blessings."

Concerning deeds and the apparent *Shirk* in them, an example is given in wearing a ring or a string in order to eliminate or fend affliction. Moreover, hanging a amulet in fearing of envy (by an eye) is not a means stated in Allâh's Legislation to do that; therefore, if someone uses these kinds of incantations, believing that it is acouse, then he has committed a minor polytheism. But if he, on the other hand, believes that these incantations are profitable by themselves, then he has committed by this act a major polytheism because he depended on something other than Allâh.

Second class: a non-apparent polytheism, and it is the polytheism in wills and intentions, such as dissimulation, which is when someone performs a worship but he intentionally aims at the praise of people for this deed. An example is given in a man who prays well or gives alms to be praised. Or he may recite Qur'ân and try to adorn his voice also to be praised. However, if deeds are mixed with dissimulation, it will certainly cause them to be in vain. Allâh said, "فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلا صَالِحًا وَلا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا" (الكهف 110) - meaning – "Whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner."

And the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, " أخوف ما أخاف عليكم الشرك الأصــغر " - meaning - "What I fear most for you is *ash-Shirk al-Asghar* (minor polytheism)." They asked then. "What is *Ash-Shirk Al-Asghar* O Messenger of Allâh?", he said, "*Ar-Riyaa'* (performing acts to show off)." An example also can be given in a man who performs some worship hoping for some worldly benefit. Such person is the one who goes to Hajj (Pilgrimage), calls to Prayer (do Athan), or leads people in Prayer in return of money, or even studies Islâmic Sciences and wage holly war (Jihad) in return for money. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "تعــس عبــد الــدينار" - meaning – "Perish the slave (passionate lover) of Dinar, Dirham, Khamila (thick soft cloth), and Khamisa (a garment), for if he is given, he is pleased; otherwise he is dissatisfied."

The Imam (Leading Scholar) Ibn Al-Qayyim said, "As for the polytheism in wells and intentions, it is a sea with no coast, and very few people are rescued from it. Therefore, whoever aimed with his deed at something other than to please Allâh at him and intended to approach someone other than Him and asked the reward from that claimed partner, then he has committed Shirk in his well and intention. On the contrary, Faithfulness is to be faithful to Allâh in word and deed and well and intention. And this is the Hanifiah (inclination from polytheism to monotheism) of Ibrahim (Abraham) that Allâh has ordered all His slaves, and would not accept anything else (in the Day of Resurrection), and it is the virtue of Islâm. Allâh said, 'وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الإسْلامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْــآخِرَةِ مِــنْ الْخَاسِــرِينَ' - meaning – 'If anyone desires a religion other than Islâm, never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good).' In fact, it is the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham) which whoever refuses is ignorant most."

We sum up from what is mentioned that there are some differences between Major and Minor Shirk and they are:

1- The Major Shirk excludes his people from Islâm into disbelief while the Minor Shirk does not.

2- The Major Shirk immortalizes his people in Hell Fire, while the Minor one does not immortalize them if they ever entered into it.

3- The Major Shirk thwarts all pious deeds (causes them to be in vain), while the Minor one does not. However, dissimulation and the work for the worldly reward cause the deeds to be in vain if they exist.

4- The Major Shirk unproscribes life and property, while Minor Shirk does not.

Kufr (Disbelief)

Definition: *Kufr* (disbelief) is the opposite of Iman (faith), so Kufr is to deny the belief in Allâh or His Messengers whether it is accompanied with accusation of lying or not; therefore, it is enough to have doubt, suspicion, renunciation, envy, pride, or proceeding after one's fancies which repel proceeding after the Holly Letter (Islâm). So these are enough to cause one to be a disbeliver although denial is greater.

Its types: *Kufr* is of two types:

First type: *Kufr* Akbar (Major Disbelief), which excludes from Islâm, and it is divided into five kinds:

First kind: Denial disbelief, and the proof is what Allâh said, "وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُ أَلَيْسَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِلْكَـــافِرِينَ" - meaning – "And who does more wrong than he who intents a lie against Allâh or rejects the Truth when it reaches him? Is there not a home in Hell for those who reject Faith?"

Second kind: Disbelief of refusal and arrogance in addition to inner belief, and the proof is Allâh's Saying, "وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنْ الْكَافِرِينَ" - meaning – "And (remember) when We said to the angels: 'Prostrate yourselves before Adam.'. And they prostrated except Iblees (Satan), he refused and was proud and was one of the disbelievers (dieobedient to Allah)."

Third kind: Disbelief of doubt and suspicion, for Allâh says, "وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ أَنْ تَبِيدَ هَذِهِ أَبَدًا. وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِنْ رُدِدْتُ إِلَى رَبِّي لأجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا مُنقَلَبًا. قَالَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَكَفَرْتَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَكَ مِـــنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّاكَ رَجُلا. لَكِنَّا هُوَ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَلا أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّي أَحَـــدًا" - meaning – "He went into his garden in a state (of mind) unjust to his soul: he said, 'I deem not that this will ever perish, nor do I deem that the Hour (of Judgment) will (ever) come. Even if I am brought back to my Lord, I shall surely find (there) something better in exchange.' His companion said to him, in the course of the argument with him: 'Does you deny Him Who created you out of the dust, then out of a sperm-drop, then fashioned you into a man? But (I think) for my part that He is Allâh, my Lord, and none shall I associate with my Lord.'"

Fourth kind: disbelief of turning away of, Allâh said, "وَالَّـــذِينَ كَفَـــرُوا عَمَّـــا أُنْـــذِرُوا مُعْرِضُـــونَ" - meaning – "But those who reject Faith turn away from that whereof they are warned."

Fifth kind: disbelief of hypocrisy. Allâh said, "ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا فَطُبِعَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لا يَفْقَهُونَ" - meaning – "That is because they believed, then they rejected Faith: so a seal was set on their hearts: therefore they understand not."

Second type: *Al-Kufr al-asghar* (Minor Disbelief), which does not exclude from Islâm but rather it is *Kufr* Amali (a practical disbelief). In fact, it is the sins which were stated in the Scriptures of Qur'ân and Sunnah as a disbelief while they do not get to a extent of the Major disbelief, such as the disbelief in the Grace of Allâh which was mentioned in Allâh's Saying, "وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ آمِنَةً مُطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَدًا مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنْعُمِ اللَّهِ" - meaning – "Allâh sets forth a Parable: a city enjoying security and quiet, abundantly supplied with sustenance from every place: yet was it ungrateful for the favours of Allâh."

And such as fighting a Muslim which is mentioned in the Prophet's Hadith, "سباب المسلم فسوق و قتاله كفر" - meaning – "Abusing a Muslim is an outrage and fighting against him is disbelief." And in his saying, " لا ترجعوا بعدي كفاراً يضرب بعضكم رقاب بعض" - meaning – "Do not return to disbelief after me by striking the necks of one another." And such as swearing by someone else than Allâh, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "من حلف بغير الله" - meaning – "He who swears by anything beside Allâh is guilty of an act of disbelief (or of associating something with Allâh)." These are considered among the deeds of the minor disbelief because Allâh has considered that the person who had committed a Kabirah (a major sin) still a believer, Allâh said, "يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلَى" - meaning – "O you who believed! The law of equality is prescribed to you in cases of murder." Therefore, He did not exclude those who commit murder from being believers but rather He considered them as being brothers to the relatives of the murdered person, He said, " فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتِّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ" - meaning – "But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand, and compensate him with handsome gratitude," and certainly brotherhood of Islâm is meant and nothing else. Allâh also said, "وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنْ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا" - meaning – "If two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel, make you peace between them." Until He said, "إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ" - meaning – "The Believers are but a single Brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers," quoted from *The Explanation of the Tahawiah*, briefly.

We can now sum up the main differences between the major and the minor disbelief as follows:

1- The major disbelief excludes from Islâm and nullifies deeds, while the minor one does not exclude from Islâm nor does it nullify deeds but rather it decreases their reward and exposes its perpetrator to the threat (of Allâh).

2- The major disbelief immortalizes the person concerned in Hell Fire, while the minor one would not immortalize him there if he ever entered it from the beginning.

3- The major disbelief unproscribes life and property, while the minor one does not.

4- The major disbelief necessitates mere enmity between the disbeliever and the believer, so that the latter is forbidden from loving or supporting the former including his closest relatives. As of the minor disbelief, it does not forbid absolute supporting, but rather its perpetrator is beloved and supported as much as he conceals of faith and hated and antagonized as much as he reveals and commits sins and disobeyment.

Hypocrisy

Hypocrisy in Shar'a (Islâmic Legislation) means showing Islâm and good intention and concealing disbelief and evil intentions. And it is called as such because it enters in Shar' from a door and then exits from another door. Allâh pointed out to this and said, "إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمْ الْفَاسِقُونَ" - meaning – "Verily the Hypocrites are rebellious and perverse." These are people who get out of the Shar'. Moreover, Allâh considered hypocrites more evil than disbelievers and said, "إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرْكِ الأَسْفَلِ مِنْ النَّارِ" - meaning – "The Hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire," and said, "إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ" - meaning – "The Hypocrites, they think they are over-reaching Allâh but He will over-reach them," and He said, "يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ. فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمْ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ" - meaning – "Fain would they deceive Allâh and those who believe, but they only deceive themselves, and realize (it) not! In their hearts is a disease; and Allâh has increased their disease: and grievous is the penalty they (incur), because they are false (to themselves)."

Types of Hypocrisy: hypocrisy is divided into two types:

First type, the doctrinal hypocrisy, is the major hypocrisy whereof hypocrite shows faith and Islâm and conceals disbelief. This type excludes from the religion completely and its perpetrator will turn out to be in the lowest depth (grade) of the Hell Fire. Moreover, Allâh has described hypocrites with all evil descriptions: disbelief, absence of faith, mocking at Religion and its people and scorning them, and a complete tendency towards the enemies of Islâm to share them this enmity. Unfortunately, these people exist at all times, especially when the Islâmic authority is powerful and they are unable to show their bad intentions, so they pretend to be Muslims in order to intrigue against their Religion in secret. They pretend so and live in Muslim societies also to preserve their lives and properties. Therefore, the hypocrite shows his belief in Allâh and His Angels, Books, Messengers, and The Last Day, while he is internally out of this belief denying all these aspects. He does not belief in Allâh, nor does he belief that Allâh has spoken His Word to His Messenger in order to guide people lest they should go astray and be punished.

As a matter of fact, Allâh has disclosed the truth of these hypocrites and revealed their secrets in His Noble Book, and then explained aspects, which instruct believers lest they should be deceived by them. Consequently, He mentioned the classification of people into three classes in the beginning of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow), believers, disbelievers, and hypocrites. Therefore, He stated for the believers fours Ayah (Signs), and for the disbelievers two, and for the hypocrites thirteen Ayah (Signs). This is certainly because they are many and because their harm is severe to Islâm and Muslim society and apparently belonging to them while in reality they are their bitter enemies. They substantiate this enmity at any suitable opportunity, while ignorant people think this is peacemaking whereof it is an extreme ignorance and mischeif.

This hypocrisy is classified into six kinds:

1- Accusing the Prophet of telling lies.

2- Denying some of what the Prophet has been sent with.

3- Hating the Prophet.

4- Hating some of what the Prophet has been sent with.

5- Happiness and pleasure at the declination of Islâm.

6- Abominating the victory of Islâm.

Second type, the practical hypocrisy, which is committing a deed of what hypocrites used to do in spite of still having faith at heart, and this does not exclude from Islâm although it is a way to do so. The person who does so still have faith in spite of hypocrisy, but if hypocrisy increases he will turn out to be a mere hypocrite, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "أربع من كن فيه" - meaning – "Four characteristics makes anyone, who possesses them, a sheer hypocrite. Anyone who possesses one of them possesses a characteristic of hypocrisy till he abandons it. When he talks he lies, when he makes a covenant he acts treacherously, when he gives a promise he breaks it, and when he quarrels he deviates from the truth." Therefore, whoever bears these four habits has actually collected all sorts of evil and all traits of hypocrites. However, a man who bears one of them is characterized by one trait of hypocrisy. In fact, a man may bear some good and Faith traits and some bad and hypocrisy ones. Moreover, he deserves to be rewarded and punished according to what he has performed from what these traits may lead to. Such as laziness in performing Salat (Prayers) in the Mosque because this is a sign of hypocrisy. It is actually a dangerous evil from which the Messenger's companions were afraid not to fall in. Ibn Abi Mulaikah said, "I saw thirty of the Messenger's companions where all fear hypocrisy."

Differences between major and minor hypocrisy:

1- Major hypocrisy excludes out of Islâm, while minor one does not.

2- Major one means the contradiction in secrecy and openness due to belief and religious doctrines, while in the minor hypocrisy, the contradiction is due to performing rituals excluding doctrines.

3- A believer should not be characterized by the major hypocrisy; however, he would commit some traits of the minor hypocrisy.

4- A person marked by the major hypocrisy usually does not repent, and even if he did repent, it is controversial whether the ruler should accept his repentance. On the other hand, a man who bears traits of the minor hypocrisy would repent, and if he did, Allâh might accept his repentance.

Concerning mere hypocrites, Allâh said about them, "صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لا يَرْجِعُونَ" - meaning – "Deaf, dumb, and blind, they will not return (to the path)," which means returning to Islâm by heart, and Allâh said about them, "أَوَلا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُمْ يُفْتَنُونَ فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ مَرَّةً أَوْ مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ لا يَتُوبُونَ وَلا هُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ" - meaning – "See they not that they are tried every year once or twice? Yet they turn not in repentance, and they take no heed."

Sheikh Al-Islâm (The Great Scholar of Islâm) Ibn Taimiah said, "Scholars argued whether his repentance should be accepted since this could not be known because they always show faith and Islâm."

One of the aspects of Shirk in the world at the present time is offering sacrifices, vows and gifts for sanctuaries and graves.

The Prophet has actually closed all ways to *Shirk* and warned his *Ummah* (Muslims) strictly not to fall in it. One of these ways is the issue of graves, where he put preserving restraints from worshipping them or exaggerating their rank. Such as:

1- He warned of exaggeration in pious and good men. This is because exaggeration leads afterwards to worshipping, he said, "إياكم والغلو" - meaning – "Be aware of Exaggeration, for (Nations) who were before you were cursed because of exaggeration." And he said, "لا تطروني" - meaning – "Do not over praise me as Christians over praised Isa (Jesus) the son of Mariam (Mary) because I am only a slave, so you should say, 'The slave and the Messenger of Allâh.'"

2- He warned of constructing buildings over graves. For Abu Al-Hayyaj Al-Asadi said, "Ali ibn Abi Talib told me once, 'Shall I send you for a mission once the Messenger of Allâh (peace be upon him) sent by for, [it is] "لا تدع" - meaning – 'Do not leave any idol unless it is destroyed, nor you leave an up leveled grave unless you level it down to ground.'"

Jaber said, "The Messenger of Allâh (peace be upon him) prohibited from plastering graves and sitting in them as well as constructing a building on them."

3- He warned of performing prayer at these graves. 'A'ishah said, "When the last moment of the life of Allâh's Messenger came, he started putting his Khamisa on his face. And when he felt hot and short of breath, he took it off his face and said, "لعنة الله علـــى اليهـــود والنصـــارى" - meaning – 'May Allâh curse the Jews and Christians for they built the places of worship at the graves of their Prophets.' The Prophet was warning (Muslims) of what those had done. Otherwise, he would have protruded his grave, but he feared it might be taken as places of worship,' and he said, "ألا وإن من قـــبلكم كـــانوا يتخـــذون" - meaning – "Those who were before you (nations) used to construct places for prayer over their Prophets' graves. Verily, I forbade you from doing so." In fact, taking graves as mosques means performing prayers there even if there is no building to pray, since every place constructed for the purpose of performing prayer is a mosque. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, " جعلت لي الأرض" - meaning – "The earth has been submitted for me (and all Muslims) as a pure place to perform Prayer." so if they construct a building thereon, it would be worse.

Unfortunately, most people violated these prohibitions and committed what the Prophet has forbidden until they fell in the Major Shirk. They constructed buildings, sanctuaries, and sepulchers over graves.

Moreover, they made from them shrine to be visited at which all sorts of polytheism is committed, such as, slaughtering for them, invoking to them, calling them for help, offering vows and so on. The great scholar Ibn Al-Qayyim said:

> Whoever compares between what the Prophet ordered or restrained from and what most people nowadays do, would certainly find a great contradiction to an extent that they would never agree.

The Prophet actually restrained from performing prayers at graves and these people perform prayers there. He restrained from taking them as mosques, while these people construct buildings there and call them sights resembling houses (mosques) of Allâh. Furthermore, he forbade lighting lamps there, while they specialize periods where they ignite lamps. Also he restrained from taking these places as feasts to celebrate, while those specialize for them feasts and ceremonies where they gather for exactly as they gather for Islâmic feasts or more.

Besides, he decreed that they must be leveled, for Imam Muslim narrated that Ibn Abi Al-Hayyaj…, and he (Imam Muslim) also reported in his Sound Book (of Hadith) that Thumamah ibn Shafei said, "We were once with Fudalah ibn Ubeid in Rome – Rodus, when one of our friends died. Fudalah then ordered to level his grave and said, 'I heard the Messenger of Allâh (peace be upon him) once commanding to level graves.'"

After all, these people exaggerate in contradicting and opposing these two Hadith (traditions) and raise graves up and build domes on them…. So you may notice this great difference between what the Messenger of Allâh (peace be upon him) has decreed with the great purpose of His prohibition and what these people have decreed and meant.

No doubt, this is a mischief which can not be controlled anymore….(mentioning this blights)… and one of them is that reason for which our Prophet decreed visiting the graves for us is to recall the Thereafter and do well deeds concerning the dead like calling Mercy from Allâh for him etc.

Therefore, a man who visits the tombs is doing well for himself as well as for the dead; however, these polytheists have turned this aspect upside down and altered their Religion when they made the reason from visiting the graves Ash-Shirk and calling the dead for help, aid and support against enemies and so on. So they turned out to be behaving badly towards themselves and towards the dead even if the consequence was just being deprived of what Allâh has decreed for our good in this concern.

Consequently, we know that offering vows and sacrifices for shrines is a major Shirk. It is actually caused by the disobedience of the Prophet's guidance due to the behaving with the dead and their graves. Some of these instructions were: not to construct buildings over them, or make mosques (places to pray) over there because when this happened, domes were built and vows were offered, then ignorant people thought that these buried people can benefit and harm, and that they can respond to their call so they offered them vows and sacrifices and are still doing this.

Finally, these graves with their people turned out to be worshipped statues, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "اللهم لا تجعـــل قـــبري" - meaning – "O Allâh! Do not let them make my grave a worshipped idol!" In fact, the Messenger of Allâh (peace be upon him) never asked this from Allâh except for that something like this is going to happen with other than his grave, and it did happen in many Islâmic countries. However, Allâh preserved his grave ? from such ignorance as a response for his call. Although some ignorant people may commit some violations there but because his grave is in his house and surrounded by three walls it is very difficult to reach his honorable grave. Ibn Al-Qayyim said, "So, the Lord of the *'alamin* responded his call when He surrounded his grave by three walls."

Al-Bid'ah (the Novelty)

Definition: the word is derived from creating something new without any previous example, it is similar to Allâh's Saying, "بَـــدِيعُ السَّـــمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ" - meaning – "To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth," which means He is its Inventor without any primary sample, and similar to what He said, "قُلْ مَا كُنْـــتُ بِـــدْعًا مِـــنْ الرُّسُـــلِ" - meaning – "Say (O Muhammad), 'I am no bringer of new-fangled doctrine among the Messengers,'" which means that I was not the first one who came with a Holly Letter from His Lord, but rather so many Messengers preceded me.

Novelty is divided into two classes:

A novelty in habits, such as creating new inventions, and this is allowed because allowance is a fundamental rule in habits unless there is an evidence to forbid.

A novelty in Religion, which is forbidden because this is its fundamental rule, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "من أحدث في أمرنا" - meaning – "He who innovates things in these affairs of ours, for which there is no valid (reason), his innovations are to be rejected."

Types of Novelty:

The novelty in Religion is two types:

First type: is the doctrinal spoken novelty, such as what Jahmiah, Mu'tazilah, Rafidah, and many other misguided denominations say and belief. An example is given in statement, which claims that the Noble Qur'ân is Allâh's creation.

Second type: is the novelty in worship, which is performing worship, which have not been decreed by Allâh. And it consists of classes:

First class: the novelty in the basis of worship, like bringing about a worship, which was not originally decreed in *Shar'* (Islâm). An example is given in claiming a prayer not originally decreed or feasts such as birthdays etc..

Second class: the novelty that is created as an addition to a certain decreed worship, such as claiming a fifth Rak'a (kneeling) in Zuhr (noon) or 'Asr (afternoon) prayers.

Third class: the novelty, which is created in the manner of the decreed worship, that is performing it in a different manner it was descended at. An example is given in reciting Allâh's invocations in a group by a melodic sound, or to be severe on one's self in worship to an extent which contradicts with the Prophet's Sunnah.

Fourth class: the novelty which is committed by setting a time for a decreed worship Allâh never decreed before, such as setting the fifteenth of Sha'ban day for fasting and its night for praying. This is because fasting and praying are intrinsically legitimate, however, setting a certain date and time for them needs absolute evidence to do.

The legislation decision (worldly sentence) of the novelty in Islâm by all its classes:

Every novelty in Religion is forbidden and going astray for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "وإياكم ومحدثات الأمور" - meaning – "Be aware of the innovated aspects (in Islâm) for every innovated aspect is a *bid'ah* and every *bid'ah* is miss-guidance, and every miss-

guidance is in the Hell Fire." And said, "من عمل عملا" - meaning – "He who innovates things in these affairs of ours, for which there is no valid (reason), his innovations are to be rejected."

So these two traditions show that every newly originated aspect in Islâm is a novelty, and that every novelty is a non-acceptable miss-guidance. This means that novelties in worship or doctrines are forbidden and their forbiddance varies according to the type of novelty. Actually, some of them are an explicit disbelief such as circumambulating graves as an approach to their people or calling them for help or offering sacrifices and vows for them. And such as what Jahmiah or Mu'tazilah say, or what might be a means of polytheism like constructing over graves and praying there. Besides, other novelties are considered as a doctrinal Fisq (disobedience), such as the novelty of Al-Khawarij or Al-Qadariah or Al-Murji'a in their sayings and doctrines which contradicts Religious evidences. However, some of the novelties are disobedience like the novelty of performing prayer and fasting in the sunlight, or committing castration as a means to stop the sexual desire.

Remark:

Those who classified the novelty into bad and good are mistaken and against the Hadith (tradition) of the Prophet who said, "فإن كل بدعة ضـــلالة" - meaning – "For every *bid'ah* (novelty) is a missguidance," so the Prophet considered all novelties as a misguidance, but these people claim that there exists some good novelty. The Hafiz (Great Scholar) Ibn Rajab said, "So the Prophet's saying, 'كل بدعة ضلالة' – 'For every *bid'ah* (novelty) is a missguidance.' is one of his words which are concise but comprehensive in meaning, and no exception can be suggested where it is a great basis among the fundamentals of Islâm similar to his saying, "من أحـــدث في أمرنـــا" – 'He who innovates anything in Islâm.' Therefore, whoever introduces a newly originated thing as an aspect of Islâm when it has no basis in it to prove is a misguided person, and Islâm disavow his claim whether it is doctrinal, in word or in deed apparently or concealed."

Furthermore, these people have no evidences to prove that there exists a good novelty except what Omar said about Taraweeh Prayer (night Prayer in Ramadan), "What a good novelty it is."

Besides, they said that many things were newly originated in Islâm and none of our good ancestors (scholars in the first three centuries after the Prophet's death) did deny one of them. Some examples for that are: the collection of Qur'ân in one Book, writing down the Hadith (tradition) of the Prophet.

In fact, these things do have a basis in Islâm so they are not novelties. As for the saying of Omar (what a good novelty it is), he did not mean at all what is concerned with the Religion but rather this concerns only linguistic innovation. In fact, the novelty (as explained before) has no basis in Islâm to prove.

However, collecting the Qur'ân in One Book does have a basis in Islâm because the Prophet used to order his companions to write down recited Ayat (signs), and because it was actually written but separately and the companions collected those separated sheets in One Book keeping them not to be lost. Moreover, the Prophet performed Salat At-Tarawih with his companions three nights but remained absent on the last one lest it should be decreed for them.

However, the companions kept praying separately (without Imam) at the time of the Prophet and after his death until Omar gathered them behind one Imam as it used to be at the time of the Prophet, thus, it is certainly not a novelty in Religion. As for writing the Hadith (tradition) of the Prophet, he used to allow his companions sometimes to write down his tradition when someone asked it from him. In fact, the reason why he disallowed writing his tradition down most of the times is that it may be confused with Qur'ân. So, when the Prophet died, this reason was not valid anymore because the Qur'ân had been checked up and verified completely before his death.

Thus, Muslims have written down Prophet's Hadith to preserve it not to be lost, may Allâh reward them the best reward for they have kept their Lord's Book and their Prophet's tradition not to be distorted by fools.

Samples of novelties these days:

1- Celebrating the Prophet's Birthday.

2- Novelties in worship and approach to Allâh.

Noveltiesthese days are plenty because of the fact that knowledge is diminished and people who invoke to Allâh have adopted these novelties as been decreed, and resembling disbelievers in rituals and habits has spread confirming what the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "لتتبعن سنن من كان قبلكم" - meaning – "You would tread the same path as was trodden by those before you." Celebrating the Prophet's Birthday in Rabee' al-Awwal (third month of the Hijri calendar):

In fact, this is a resembling to Christians in their feast which is called 'Christmas'; however, ignorant Muslims and miss-guided scholars celebrate in Rabee' al-Awwal yearly celebrate the Prophet's Birthday. Some of them celebrate this occasion in mosques and some of them do it in houses or specially prepared places. Many people attend these celebrations doing what Christians do in their Christmas novelty.

In addition to its being a newly generated aspect in Islâm, these celebration include so many forms of polytheism and abominable acts such as reciting poems which exaggerate in praising the Prophet or calling him for help, where he forbade these acts by saying, "لا تطروني" - meaning – "Do not praise me excessively as Jesus, son of Marry was praised, but call me Allâh's Slave and His Messenger."

These people may think that the Prophet himself attends their celebration, which is accompanied by melodic and tonal songs and drums and other Sufis heresies. Besides, there might be a mixture between men and women, which may cause seduction and certainly leads to adultery. As a matter of fact, even if none of these breaches occur and it was limited to celebration and feeling delightful, but this does not set aside the fact that it is a novelty and each novelty is a miss-guidance. Besides, it is an inevitable means that leads to those mentioned breaches.

We said, 'it is a *Bid'ah* (novelty)' because it has no considerable origin in the Book (Qur'ân) or in the Sunnah (Prophet's Tradition) or even in the deeds of the Good Ancestors in the best three centuries. However, it took place tardily after the fourth century, where the Fatimis (group of the Shi'a) produced it.

Al-Imam Abu Hafs Tajuddeen Al-Fakihani said:

As to follow, some blessed people asked me repeatedly about the meeting that some people do in Rabee' Al-Awwal, where they call it Al-Mawlid (The Birthday) whether it has a basis in the Religion or not. They purposed the question inclusively, and aimed at the required answer. So I said, hoping Allâh's granted success, 'I did not find any basis for this Mawlid in the Book (Qur'ân) nor in the Sunnah (Prophet's Tradition), and none of the Muslim Nation's Scholars, who are traditionalist examples in Islâm, has done such things. But rather, it is a *Bid'ah* (novelty) originated by liars.

Sheikh Al-Islâm Ibn Taimiyah said, 'And as for what some people originated, either resembling the Christians or expressing their love to the Prophet, such as considering the Prophet's Birthday as a feast, not mentioning the disagreement in the date of his birth, is a newly originated act. Actually, our good ancestors have not considered its existence, so if it were a pure or likely good act, they should have done it because they are worthier than anybody else in it.

In fact, they loved their Prophet most and honored him most, and even more they observe performing good deeds most. However, they realized that loving and honoring the Prophet is only represented by following and obeying him. They expressed their love to the Prophet by following his orders, restoring his Sunnah (Tradition) internally and externally, spreading his Message, and fighting for the sake of this by heart, word and deed.

This is the way of the foremost to embrace Islâm and Al-Muhajirun (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansar (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to Al-Muhajirun) and also those who followed them exactly (in faith)... Briefly.

Many letters have been written to deny this *Bid'ah* (novelty) which is may lead later on to produce other birthdays for Awlia' (patrons of Allâh) and Islâmic leaders. So it will certainly open a huge source of evil in Islâm.

Novelties in worship and approach to Allâh:

Noveltiesproduced in worship these times are many. In fact, the basis in worship is entail, so that none of them should be legislated except with evidence. However, those which are not provided with evidence are novelties for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "من عمل عمـــلا" - meaning – "He who innovates things in these affairs of ours, for which there is no valid (reason), his innovations are to be rejected."

Such worship which are performed these days without any considerable evidence are plenty, some of them are:

Pronounce the intention for the Prayer, such as saying, 'I intend to pray to Allâh such and such Prayer.' This is a *Bid'ah* (novelty) for it is not stated in the Prophet's Sunnah (Tradition) and because Allâh said, "قُلْ أَتُعَلِّمُونَ اللَّهَ بِدِينِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَـــيْءٍ عَلِـــيمٌ" - meaning – "Say (O Muhammad), 'What! Will you instruct Allâh about your religion? But Allâh knows all that is in the heavens and on earth: He has full knowledge of all things.'"

As a matter of fact, the intention is expressed in the heart for it is one of the heart activities not the tongue. And likely the *Bid'ah* of invocation of Allâh publicly after the Prayer because the decreed is that everybody should perform invocation to Allâh by his own.

Another one is reciting Surat Al-Fatihah in certain occasions and after *du'aa'* (calling Allâh for help) and for the dead. And also such innovated activities like making obsequies for the dead, cooking for people, and employing a reader to recite Qur'ân there. Moreover, they believe that it benefits the dead, where it is a misleading novelty Allâh never decreed.

Another one is the celebration in Islâmic occasions such as al-Israa' wal Mi'raaj and al-Hijrah an-Nabawiyyah (Prophet's migration to Al-Madinah). These are also innovated celebrations with no basis in the Religion. Furthermore, some people perform Umrah (Minor Pilgrimage) in Rajab (the seventh month of the Hijri calendar) on purpose where they call it Al-Umrah Ar-Rajabiah. In fact, there should not be any specifications due to worship in this month.

Some of the innovated novelties are the Sufis invocations that contradict with the decreed invocations in statements, forms, and times.

Another *Bid'ah* is to specify the fifteenth of Sha'ban (the eighth month of the Hijri calendar) in praying its night and fasting its day for none of them was stated in the Prophet's Sunnah (Tradition).

Another one is the construction of building over graves and making them places to perform Prayers, not mentioning visiting them to call the dead for help and all other polytheist acts which are committed there besides being visited by women who are prohibited from doing this repeatedly.

Finally:

We should say that Bida' (novelties) are the message of *Kufr* (disbelief). It is an addition to our Religion not previously decreed by Allâh or His Messenger. In fact, *Bid'ah* is worse than Kabirah (great sin), and the Satan is more delighted by it because the sinner commits his sins where he knows that it is a sin, so he may repent afterwards. On the other hand, the person who commits *Bid'ah*, believes that it is a worship by which he should approach to Allâh, so, most likely, he may not ever repent. Moreover, Bida' annihilate Prophet's traditions in the society and render traditions and those who are bound to them ostracized.

Finally, bid'ah keep their people away from Allâh, necessitates His Rage and Punishment, and cause hearts miss-guidance and corruption.